EBIT unveils special metaverse shoe collection to raise mental health awareness

By Sandra Halliday - May 17, 2022

So far we’ve seen the metaverse frequently being used by the fashion sector to boost brand engagement, generate revenue and increase customer engagement. But it’s also being seen as a key forum for fashion charity initiatives and now it’s being used by EBIT to raise awareness of mental health issues, with a launch that see 10% of sales revenue also going to the National Autistic Society.

Via a new form of extended reality (XR) offering where digital fashion, footwear design and brand purpose all combine as NFTs, EBIT on 19 May is releasing Spectrum of Footwear [E010]. This is a debut range of metaverse-ready digital shoes and sneakers in collaboration with The Dematerialised, the experiential market-space for Digital Fashion. The collection of 10 “morphing styles draws inspiration from the spectrum of mental health conditions”.

EBIT — or “Enjoy Being In Transition” — is a collective created “to provoke dialogue and empathy around mental health via fashion, music, all aspects of art”. And it returns to the virtual fashion scene with the launch of its range of 10 game-engine-ready 3D-designed shoes that can be worn by avatars in the metaverse and digital dressing in real life. The styles will be available to purchase as NFTs via that link-up with The Dematerialised.
EBIT said the project “pushes the boundaries of brand purpose and experience, and of product utility and function”.

Previous collabs last year saw it combining with Glen Luchford, Michel Gaubert and Soo Joo Park in digital streetwear, art, and music, “all of which emerged to provoke empathy around mental health”.

As mentioned, there are 10 styles on offer, “designed across a spectrum, where elements of each style morph and sequentially overlap”.

That means “80s vibe slingback sneaker mules morph into flat-grain leather low-tops then classic basketball high-tops, before hybridising into post-modern Chelsea boots, clogs and wedge-heels, before completing the spectrum”.

Each one has a 69cm signature EBIT label that “contains subtle references to morality, mental health and youth culture, and features on all EBIT products physical and/or virtual”.

As well as highlighting conditions such as Asperger’s, depression, ADHD, schizophrenia and more, the project also “highlights a new form of brand marketing”, we’re told. That’s because the range has been designed in the real word by EBIT’s Dominic Laurelli, but developed, marketed and sold completely in 3D, “not for physical consumption but for virtual utility, digital dressing and purpose-driven awareness”.

The rendering and NFT assets were created by Amsterdam-based fashion CGI specialist INDG in partnership with Bastiaan Geluk, Markus Bauer, Nick Hussain and Ben Mahon. Digital product development was led by Jaime Galipienso, with Didac Albors and Joseto Garcia.

The collectability of the pieces comes as one style is made available for auction of one unit only while the other nine come in limited quantities up to 50 units.

Each NFT has different versions “to enhance utility across IRL and URL”. They include a 3D style of footwear (GLB), a game engine optimised 3D style of footwear (USZD), an exclusive 2D digital art piece (.png), an exclusive 3D digital art piece (.mp4) and first notice of availability of physical EBIT products.

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